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NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL REZONING STUDY
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents recommendations for the comprehensive rezoning of San Francisco's neighborhood commercial districts. The zoning provisions which currently regulate land uses on commercial streets are the result of studies made by the Department of City Planning during the late 1950s and adopted in 1960. In the twenty-four years since the adoption of the existing zoning controls, the spectrum of uses in commercial districts has changed considerably, making revisions necessary.

The report covers all commercial districts in San Francisco except those downtown (C-3) and certain areas currently under separate study by the Department of City Planning (North of Market, Chinatown, and Van Ness Avenue).

The report proposes changes in the Master Plan policies governing neighborhood commercial districts and a new section (Article 7) of the City Planning Code to establish a comprehensive, flexible system of neighborhood commercial zoning controls. Land uses in each of the city's neighborhood commercial areas would be controlled by one of five basic zoning districts recommended in the report. In fifteen neighborhood commercial areas, however, individually applied controls are proposed to accommodate special circumstances at those locations. A main feature of Article 7 is a table which displays all controls, either directly or by reference to other sections of the Code. Article 7 also contains sections describing the purpose of each district, standards and permitted uses, references to approval procedures, and definitions.

New controls are proposed for certain kinds of uses such as bars, restaurants, places of entertainment, financial offices, and upper-story commercial uses. In selected districts, an absolute limit would be placed on the amount of commercial frontage that could be occupied by eating and drinking establishments. Controls would also encourage new development to respect the existing scale and character of a shopping area.

EXISTING ZONING

4 Base Districts

- RC-1 Residential Commercial Combined, Low Density
- RC-2 Residential Commercial Combined, Moderate Density
- C-1 Neighborhood Shopping
- C-2 Community Business

Plus

Some districts have additional controls in the form of special use district overlays:

Castro Street
Upper Fillmore Street
Haight Street
Hayes -Gough
Upper Market Street
Sacramento Street
Union Street
Valencia Street
24th Street - Mission
24th Street - Noe Valley

Some districts have additional controls in the form of moratoria on certain uses:

Inner Clement Street
Outer Clement Street
North Beach
Polk Street

Format

Existing controls are contained in various sections of the Code without cross references.

PROPOSED ZONING

5 Base Districts

- NC-1 Neighborhood Commercial Cluster
- NC-2 Small Scale Neighborhood Commercial
- NC-3 Moderate Scale Neighborhood Commercial
- NC-S Neighborhood Commercial Shopping Center
- GC General Commercial

Districts needing specialized controls would be controlled separately, without overlays:

Broadway
Castro Street
Inner Clement Street
Outer Clement Street
Upper Fillmore Street
Haight Street
Hayes-Gough
Upper Market Street
North Beach
Polk Street
Sacramento Street
Union Street
Valencia Street
24th Street - Mission
24th Street - Noe Valley

Format

Proposed Article 7 would contain a table with a separate column for each district listing all controls either directly or by reference.

ISSUES

In recent years, changes in population, retailing techniques, and other economic and social factors have brought new vitality to many of San Francisco's neighborhood commercial districts. Active businesses in new and remodeled buildings have broadened district trade areas and enhanced the variety and availability of retail goods and services. In most cases, the increased activity has benefited both the business and residential communities. However, in some districts, changes have included a loss of neighborhood-serving shops and services, and an increase in traffic and parking congestion, noise, and disruptive late-night activity.

The most dramatic change in land use patterns in neighborhood commercial districts has been the growth in numbers of eating and drinking establishments, financial institutions, medical, business and professional offices, and specialty stores. Rapid change in the land use composition of several popular districts has upset the traditional mix of uses and resulted in the loss of certain types of essential services and stores. One major cause of the displacement of neighborhood-serving businesses has been the expansion of the number of eating and drinking establishments and financial institutions which, due to their business volume, are able to afford higher rents. In some commercial districts the loss of convenience stores, such as hardware stores and pharmacies, has made it difficult for neighborhood residents to find essential goods and services.

In addition to disrupting the traditional mix of local-serving businesses, concentrations of eating and drinking establishments have disturbed both merchants and residents by generating nuisances such as traffic and parking congestion, trash, noise, raucous behavior, and late night activity.

Rising rents in downtown San Francisco have forced small businesses to look for office space in neighborhood commercial districts. Strong demand and competition for ground-story retail space in neighborhood commercial districts have led office activities to look for upper-story space. The result has been an increase in conversions of residential units to commercial uses, primarily medical, business, and professional services. Conversions of upper-story residential units threaten the mixed-use character of neighborhood commercial districts and reduce a valuable source of housing for San Francisco residents.

Large-scale development has also changed the physical scale and character of some neighborhood commercial districts. Financial institutions and office/retail buildings built in the last fifteen years often occupy large corner lots. Some new buildings use architectural styles and building materials which are not consistent with the traditional character of established neighborhood commercial districts. By disregarding the prevailing scale and style of small buildings and commercial uses, these buildings can upset the visual cohesiveness of the smaller-scaled neighborhood shopping districts.

GOALS

The primary goals of the proposed rezoning are to:

- Make necessary revisions and additions to Master Plan policies as they relate to neighborhood commercial areas. Proposed revisions to the Commerce and Industry Element reflect objectives for the city's diverse neighborhood commercial districts. Guidelines for commercial development are included to provide the business and residential communities, as well as public officials, with criteria for the evaluation of neighborhood commercial development proposals.
- Revise zoning districts, categories, and controls to reflect the needs of neighborhood commercial districts and incorporate new zoning methodology where necessary to adequately regulate land uses.
- Consolidate all zoning controls into one section of the Planning Code to facilitate an understanding of the zoning requirements for any commercial property or district. Modify procedures for permit processing to simplify the conditional use process in certain cases.

REPORT SUMMARY

REVISIONS AND ADDITIONS TO THE MASTER PLAN

Existing policies of the Commerce and Industry Element are revised to reflect current land use patterns and objectives. New policies include:

- a Generalized Neighborhood Commercial Land Use Plan (Policy 5);
- a specific policy for conversion of residential units in commercial districts (Policy 2);
- detailed land use and design guidelines for neighborhood commercial district development Policies 1 and 6);
- policies of the Residence and Transportation Elements which relate to neighborhood commercial districts are also included in the report.

The Commerce and Industry Element policies are listed below with brief descriptions of additions and revisions.

Objective 8

MAINTAIN AND STRENGTHEN VIABLE NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL AREAS EASILY ACCESSIBLE TO CITY RESIDENTS.

Policy 1

Promote diversity among the city's neighborhood commercial districts while assuring that each continues to provide neighborhood serving goods and services.

This policy has been revised and expanded to include guidelines for all new uses as well as specific uses such as eating and drinking establishments and auto-oriented facilities.

Policy 2

Preserve and promote the mixed commercial-residential character in neighborhood commercial districts.

This new policy discusses the locations and circumstances under which conversions of residential units to non-residential uses would be appropriate.

Policy 3

Encourage the location of neighborhood shopping areas throughout the city so that essential retail goods and personal services are accessible to all residents.

This new policy encourages convenience retail uses to locate so that all residential areas in the city are within a one-quarter to one-half mile service radius.

Policy 4

Discourage creation of major new commercial areas except in conjunction with supportive residential development and transportation capacity.

This policy remains essentially unchanged.

Policy 5

Adopt specific zoning districts which conform to a generalized neighborhood commercial land use plan.

This new policy establishes a generalized land use plan with six categories of neighborhood commercial districts.

Policy 6

Promote high quality urban design on commercial streets.

This policy is revised to include design guidelines for site planning, building height and bulk, architectural design, signs, open space, and landscaping.

Policy 7

Promote neighborhood commercial revitalization.

This policy remains essentially unchanged.

Policy 8

Encourage community-based economic development.

This policy remains essentially unchanged.

Residence Element

Objective 3

RETAIN THE EXISTING SUPPLY OF HOUSING.

Policy 2

Restrict the conversion of housing in commercial and industrial areas.

Objective 6

PROVIDE A QUALITY LIVING ENVIRONMENT.

Policy 2

Allow appropriate neighborhood-serving commercial activities in residential areas.

Transportation Element

Citywide Parking Plan

Objective 1

ENSURE THAT THE PROVISION OF NEW OR ENLARGED PARKING FACILITIES DOES NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE LIVABILITY AND DESIRABILITY OF THE CITY AND ITS VARIOUS NEIGHBORHOODS.

Policy 1

Assure that new or enlarged parking facilities meet need, locational, and design criteria.

Objective 4

MEET SHORT-TERM PARKING NEEDS IN NEIGHBORHOOD SHOPPING DISTRICTS CONSISTENT WITH PRESERVATION OF A DESIRABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR PEDESTRIANS AND RESIDENTS.

Policy 1

Assure that new neighborhood shopping district parking facilities and other auto-oriented uses meet established guidelines.

ZONING FRAMEWORK

Article 7 is proposed as a new section of the Planning Code. Its main features are:

- a table displaying all controls directly or by reference for each district;
- sections describing the purposes of each district;
- a section listing building envelope standards which cannot be modified, as well as those which are subject to special exception, variance, or administrative change;
- a section listing uses which are permitted as principal, conditional, accessory, or temporary uses;
- references to approval procedures, which include a proposed Consent Calendar to facilitate approval of non-controversial permit applications;
- definitions.

NEW ZONING CONTROLS

Under the proposed new zoning there are 50 categories of building standards (such as height limits, maximum lot size, and rear yard requirements) and permitted uses. They are the following.

General Building Envelope Standards

Height
Lot Size
Rear Yards
Street Trees

Commercial and Institutional Standards and Uses

Floor Area Ratio
Square Footage per Use
Off-Street Parking, Commercial and Institutional
Off-Street Freight Loading
General Advertising Signs
Business Signs
Outdoor Activity
Drive-Up Facility
Walk-Up Facility
Hours of Operation
Residential Conversions

Retail Sales and Services

Retail Sales and Services (Not Listed Below)
Drinking Establishment (Bar)
Drinking Establishment (Excluding Bar)
Restaurant
Take-Out Food Establishment

Movie Theater
Adult Entertainment
Place of Entertainment
Amusement Game Establishment
Financial Service (Retail)
Limited Financial Service
Medical Service
Personal Service
Business, Professional Service (Retail)
Tourist Hotel
Tourist Motel
Auto Parking
Gas Station, Service
Auto Repair
Auto Service, Rental
Animal Hospital
Ambulance Service
Mortuary

Non-Retail Sales and Services

Non-Retail Service
Light Manufacturing

Institutions

Hospital, Medical Center
Other Institutions
Public Facilities

Residential Standards and Uses

Residential Uses
Residential Density, Dwelling Units
Residential Density, Other Residential Uses
Off-Street Parking, Residential
Community Residential Garage

A number of these control categories do not exist under the existing zoning.
They are:

Lot Size

It is recommended that the size of new development be regulated by prescribing the maximum size of lots for new or expanding development in most neighborhood commercial districts. The limits reflect the typical or appropriate lot size in districts where such controls are applicable. New development should respect established scale and development patterns through the design of buildings that are not too bulky or massive. In some cases, new development on lots exceeding the threshold limit could be permitted as conditional uses, depending on: 1) the kinds of structures and uses replaced or added to by the new development; 2) the scale, design, and use composition of the proposed development relative to the established district character and; 3) the potential environmental impacts.

Square Footage per Use

It is recommended that limits be set on the size of each individual non-residential use, based on the use size generally appropriate in each district. In certain circumstances, larger uses may be permitted, depending on consideration of the type of use, the design and articulation of the use in relation to the established district use scale and design, and the potential environmental impacts.

Use Controls by Story

It is recommended that uses be regulated according to their location in the building: the first story and below, second story, and third story and above. The use controls generally prescribe the number of building stories that commercial uses can occupy, leaving the remaining stories for residential use. The use controls for various districts are designed to respect the desired character of the district.

Residential Conversion to Non-Residential Use

It is recommended that regulations be applied to the conversion of an existing housing unit or units to non-residential use. Demolition of housing units and replacement by a non-residential use would also be controlled. In order to allow for active retail storefronts, conversions would be permitted at the first story in all districts. At the upper stories, conversions would be prohibited in districts which contain large quantities of affordable housing and which still have ample opportunities for commercial development at the ground story and/or in new construction on underutilized sites. In other districts, conversions above the ground story would be permitted as principal or conditional uses, depending on the district. Conditional review of conversions would consider the extent of conversion activity that has already taken place, the extent of remaining housing stock, the affordability and physical condition of the units to be converted, the availability of commercial space within and near the district, and the demand for commercial space in the district.

Eating and Drinking Establishments

In order to control the number, size and location of eating and drinking establishments in districts where they are a problem, a new system of thresholds and ceilings is proposed. This approach is based on the percentage of ground-story commercial frontage occupied by eating and drinking establishments. In most districts eating and drinking establishments would be permitted as principal uses until a threshold of 20% of the district's commercial frontage contains eating and drinking establishments. Thereafter, existing eating and drinking establishments could be modified and new ones could be approved only as conditional uses until a 25% ceiling is reached. At this point, existing establishments could be modified by conditional use, but no new eating and drinking establishments would be permitted to locate in the district.

Financial Services

In certain individual districts, growth of financial service establishments has been problematic and regulated in the recent past by density threshold controls and moratoria. The proposed controls would require conditional use review in most individual districts. Such review would consider the inventory and location of existing financial services in and near the district, the displacement of smaller retail businesses, the type of functions included in the proposed financial service's operation, and the design and scale of the use as it could affect active pedestrian-oriented frontages and the scale and character of surrounding buildings. Financial services which are restricted to a limited size large enough to provide convenience banking services without disruption of the existing neighborhood scale and pattern would be permitted in all districts at the first story, and at the upper stories in the more intensive districts.

Medical, Personal, and Business and Professional Services

Medical, personal, and business and professional services are uses requiring office space in which to operate. These uses are considered retail services if their primary activity serves the general public, including neighborhood residents, as opposed to a business clientele.

Controls are designed to provide for medical, personal, and professional and business services in first-, and in most cases, second-story locations. In the less intensive districts, where first story space is available and upper stories are reserved for residences, these services could locate only at the first story. In most of the other districts, they would be permitted as principal or conditional uses at the upper stories, depending on whether the district could accommodate additional upper-story office space. These controls would apply in conjunction with the controls for conversion of housing units, except in cases involving new construction. Conditional use review, would consider the district's current inventory and market for medical, personal, and professional and business services; the available first story space; the proposed and alternative means of providing the space (conversion, new construction); and the proposed design and its impact on surrounding uses.

Business services whose primary activity is with the business community and not with the general public are inappropriate in most neighborhood-oriented commercial districts and would be prohibited.

Hours of Operation

This new control would regulate late night commercial activity in most neighborhood commercial districts.

Street Trees

It is recommended that street trees be required to be planted as part of each new development in neighborhood commercial districts, except in cases where irrigation problems exist or where trees interfere with utilities or signs.

NEW ZONING DISTRICTS

It is recommended that five base commercial districts be established and selectively applied to approximately 225 neighborhood commercial locations throughout the city. These five districts would replace the existing RC-1, RC-2, C-1, and C-2 districts in the San Francisco City Planning Code.

NC-1 Neighborhood Commercial Cluster

These districts provide retail goods and personal services for their surrounding neighborhoods during primarily daytime hours. They are designed to replace most of the existing RC-1, RC-2, and C-1 districts; and generally consist of one or two blocks or small clusters of three or more commercial establishments, commonly grouped at a corner.

Controls provide for neighborhood commercial services on the first floor and residential development on upper stories. Requirements for rear yards are intended to preserve existing backyard space. The variety of uses to be permitted is the most restrictive in the city's neighborhood commercial districts, and most commercial uses which could impact residential livability are prohibited.

Examples of the NC-1 district include the corners along Church Street between 25th and 30th Streets.

NC-2 Small-Scale Neighborhood Commercial District

The NC-2 zoning district is intended to replace small- and moderately-sized C-2 districts. It includes linear neighborhood commercial districts which have a predominant neighborhood orientation, such as Cole and Chestnut Streets.

These districts provide convenience goods and services to their surrounding neighborhood as well as limited comparison shopping goods for a wider market. The range of comparison goods and services offered is varied and often includes specialty retail stores, movie theaters, restaurants, as well as neighborhood-serving offices. NC-2 districts are commonly located along both collector and arterial streets which have transit routes.

The district controls provide for commercial development on the ground and second stories and residences on the upper stories. Eating and drinking establishments, however, are confined to the ground story. The second story may be used by some retail stores, personal services, medical, business and professional offices, and residences. No commercial uses are allowed on the third story and above. Residences and certain institutional facilities are the only permitted uses above the second story.

NC-3 Moderate-Scale Neighborhood Commercial District

The NC-3 zoning district is designed to replace the larger C-2 districts and consequently includes the largest and most intensely developed neighborhood commercial districts in San Francisco, such as Geary Boulevard from Masonic to 11th Avenue.

These districts are intended to serve in most cases as linear shopping streets which offer comparison and specialty goods to a population greater than the immediate neighborhood, as well as provide convenience goods and services to their surrounding neighborhoods. The range of goods and services offered is extensive and includes all types of retail and personal, medical, business, and professional service establishments.

NC-3 districts are located along heavily-trafficked thoroughfares which also serve as major transit routes. They include several of the longest linear commercial streets in the city, some of which have continuous retail development for many blocks. Large-scale lots and buildings and wide streets distinguish the district from smaller-scaled commercial streets, although they include small- as well as moderately-scaled lots. Buildings typically range in height from two to four stories with occasional taller structures. Many commercial buildings do not have rear yards.

A diversified commercial environment is encouraged for the NC-3 district, and a wide variety of uses are permitted. Building envelope standards encourage moderately large commercial uses and buildings. Rear yards are only required at residential levels. Retail businesses are permitted on a building's first and second story, while personal services and offices are permitted on all stories. Limited wholesale and light manufacturing activities are permitted only on the first and second stories. Since only a small number of residential units are located in this district, conversions are permitted on all stories. In addition, new residential development is permitted on all upper stories.

NC-S Neighborhood Commercial Shopping Center

The NC-S zoning district is a new district designed to replace C-1 and C-2 district controls for shopping centers and supermarket sites. They are intended to serve as small and mid-sized shopping centers which provide retail goods and personal services for car-oriented shoppers. Shopping centers commonly contain at least one anchor department store or supermarket, and some districts also have small medical office buildings. The range of services offered at their retail outlets usually serves a larger population than the immediate neighborhood and in the case of one large shopping center is in competition with the downtown retail district and other prominent retail streets.

Shopping centers and supermarket sites bear little relation to the surrounding street network and residential development. The prevailing one-story buildings are removed from the street edge and are set in a parking lot. Ground and second floors are devoted to retail sales and some personal services and offices. Building envelope standards allow for large commercial uses and buildings. Retail businesses are permitted on all building stories. Limited wholesale and light manufacturing activities are permitted as conditional uses on all stories.

GC General Commercial

A General Commercial district is proposed for areas which are currently zoned C-2, but are not neighborhood serving, such as the Ferry Building, Fisherman's Wharf, Candlestick Cove, the North Sansome-Battery corridor, as well as portions of Lombard Street. Building envelope standards and permitted uses would remain essentially unchanged from existing C-2 controls at this time. However, they could be amended in the future if changing conditions warrant modifications, either for all GC districts or on an individualized basis.

DISTRICTS PROPOSED FOR SPECIALIZED REGULATIONS

Fifteen new individual zoning districts are proposed for districts with special land use problems. The recommendations for these districts are summarized below.

Broadway

The Broadway neighborhood commercial district is part of a large commercial area including North Beach to the north, Chinatown to the southwest, and parts of Jackson Square to the southeast.

Broadway's special popularity as a citywide and regional entertainment district is derived from a concentration of nightclubs, music halls, adult theaters, bars, and restaurants between Grant Avenue and Montgomery Street. These places attract locals and visitors alike, mainly in the evening and late night hours. The western section of Broadway contains a lively mix of small-scale restaurants and stores. Besides the retail and entertainment businesses, Broadway contains many upper-story residential hotels. Due to its proximity to downtown, strong pressures exist to develop upper-story offices in the eastern section of the district.

The Broadway district is designed to encourage development that is compatible with the existing building scale, and maintain the district's balance of places of entertainment, restaurants, and small-scale retail stores serving local residents. Commercial uses are permitted in the first two stories and housing in the upper stories, in keeping with the district's mixed-use character. Existing affordable housing is protected by regulating the conversion of upper-story residential units to non-residential uses. While permitting most types of retail uses, special controls are necessary to prevent the location of non-retail offices. Due to the high traffic volume on Broadway, auto-intensive uses such as gas stations, auto repair garages, and drive-up uses are prohibited. Parking garages are permitted as conditional uses if their design includes entries and exits that do not disrupt the traffic flows on Broadway.

Castro Street

The multi-purpose commercial district along Castro and 18th Streets provides both convenience goods to its immediate neighborhood as well as comparison shopping goods and services on a specialized basis to a wider trade area. Commercial businesses are active both in the daytime and late into the evening and include a number of bars, restaurants and specialty clothing and gift stores which serve both San Francisco's gay community and other city residents. The district also supports a number of offices in converted residential buildings.

The district proposed for Castro Street is designed to maintain existing small-scale development and promote a balanced mix of uses. Future commercial uses are permitted at the ground story, and are conditional on the second story, thereby reserving the uppermost stories for residential occupancy. Existing housing units are protected by requiring conditional use review for conversions of residences at the second story and not permitting them above that level. In order to maintain convenience stores and protect adjacent residential livability, controls regulate the proliferation of new eating and drinking establishments and financial institutions. The continuous retail frontage is further maintained by prohibiting most automobile and drive-up uses.

Inner Clement Street

The Inner Clement Street commercial district is located in northwest San Francisco in the Richmond district. The commercial district provides a wide selection of convenience goods for the residents of the Inner Richmond district. The Inner Clement commercial district's nightlife is characterized by numerous eating and drinking establishments, places of entertainment, a movie theater and some retail establishments open during evening hours. The concentration of restaurants on Inner Clement Street is equal to any commercial street in San Francisco, drawing customers from throughout the city and region. There are also a significant number of professional, realty, and business offices as well as financial institutions. The district's pleasant pedestrian character is derived directly from the densely developed retail frontages.

The district proposed for Inner Clement Street is designed to promote development that is consistent with existing land use patterns and supportive of the district's vitality. New development may contain commercial uses in the first two stories, although conditional use review is required at the second story. Existing upper-story residential units would be preserved by prohibiting their conversions to commercial use. Special controls are necessary to preserve the equilibrium between convenience and comparison shopping businesses, and to minimize the impacts generated by the growth of eating and drinking establishments. In order to maintain the street's active retail frontage, controls also regulate the development of financial institutions and automobile uses.

Outer Clement Street

The Outer Clement Street neighborhood commercial district, located on Clement Street between 19th Avenue and 27th Avenue, contains small scale convenience businesses as well as many restaurants and a movie theater which serve a neighborhood and citywide clientele during the evening hours. Convenience shopping uses cater for the most part to daytime neighborhood shoppers. Outer Clement Street contains mixed-use buildings interspersed with fully commercial and fully residential buildings.

The district proposed for Outer Clement Street is designed to promote development that is in keeping with the district's existing small-scale, mixed-use character. Future commercial growth is confined to the ground story in order to promote more continuous and active retail frontage. To foster mixed-use buildings, new housing development is encouraged at the upper stories. Conversions of existing upper-story housing units are restricted. Restaurants are regulated in order to limit the problems of traffic, congestion, noise and late night activity associated with such uses. Other special controls are designed to preserve the low-intensity character of the district.

Upper Fillmore Street

The Upper Fillmore Street neighborhood commercial district runs north-south along Fillmore Street from Jackson to Bush and extends west one block along California and Pine Streets in the south-central portion of Pacific Heights. This medium-scaled, multi-purpose commercial district provides convenience goods for the immediate neighborhood and comparison shopping goods and services on a specialized basis to a wider trade area. Many businesses are active during both day and evening, including a number of bars, restaurants, specialty groceries, and specialty clothing stores.

The moderate building scale of the Upper Fillmore Street neighborhood commercial district has a dense, mixed-use character of residential levels above one to two levels of commercial use. Controls proposed for the district would maintain this character by permitting commercial uses at the first two stories, reserving the upper two stories for residential uses. In existing buildings, commercial growth by conversions of residential units is monitored by conditional use review at the second story and prohibited above that level. As one of the more active commercial districts in San Francisco, special controls are necessary to preserve the balance between convenience and specialty commercial uses. In order to maintain convenience stores and protect adjacent livability, the development and operation of eating and drinking establishments and financial institutions are limited.

Haight Street

The Haight Street shopping area provides convenience goods and services to local Haight-Ashbury residents as well as comparison shopping goods and services to a larger citywide market area. The commercial district is also frequented by users of Golden Gate Park on weekends and by city residents especially for eating, drinking, and entertainment. Numerous housing units establish the district's mixed residential-commercial character.

The district proposed for Haight Street is designed to protect the existing building scale and promote new mixed-use development which is in character with adjacent buildings. Commercial uses are directed primarily to the ground story. In further promoting the mixed-use character, new buildings would require conditional use review for second story commercial uses. New housing in upper stories would be permitted. In existing buildings, valuable rental housing units are protected by prohibiting upper-story conversions to non-residential use. Individual controls are also necessary to maintain the balanced mix of commercial uses in the Haight Street district. Limits on eating, drinking, entertainment, tourist accommodations, and financial services are intended to regulate the more intensive commercial uses which have recently threatened the variety and mix of goods and services available.

Hayes-Gough

The Hayes-Gough neighborhood commercial district, adjoining the Civic Center and Performing Arts complex, west of San Francisco's Downtown, functions as a mixed residential-commercial area. The commercially-zoned area contains several sections, which are distinct from each other in their use composition and character. Different sections are proposed to be zoned to residential, other neighborhood commercial, or general commercial zoning districts. Specific controls are proposed for the core area focused on Hayes and Gough Streets. Uses around that intersection contain a limited range of retail commercial activity, mostly catering to the immediate needs of the neighborhood. Restaurants and art galleries attract a wider clientele including Performing Arts and Civic Center workers and visitors.

The district proposed is designed to allow growth and expansion compatible with the existing building and use scale. At the same time, new development should not reduce significantly the availability of affordable housing. Commercial uses are permitted to occupy entire lots of the first two stories and reviewed as conditional uses above the second story. New residential development is promoted on the upper stories. Conversions of existing upper-story residential units are protected and monitored by conditional use review.

Special controls aim to promote vital pedestrian-oriented commercial activity by permitting most retail uses at the ground story, but restricting certain sensitive and problematic uses such as entertainment and automotive uses. Retail sales activity is further promoted by requiring conditional review for new offices seeking ground story space.

Upper Market Street

The Upper Market Street neighborhood commercial district extends three long blocks along Market Street from Church to Castro Street, in addition to several adjacent blocks and lots on the cross streets. It is a multi-purpose commercial district that provides limited convenience goods to several neighborhoods bordering Upper Market. Nevertheless, it serves largely as a specialty shopping street for a broader trade area. A large number of offices are located on Market Street due to its easy transit access to downtown. The width of Market Street and its use as a major arterial diminish the perception of a single commercial district. Rather the street appears as a collection of dispersed commercial centers, concentrated at Market and secondary street intersections.

The district proposed for Upper Market Street is designed to promote larger-scale development and to preserve the existing mix of commercial uses in a manner that maintains the livability of the surrounding residential areas. Larger development is allowed to better define the street and create a better identity for the district. In order to encourage mixed-use buildings with continuous retail frontage, commercial uses are permitted by right at the first two stories, but require conditional use review above the second story. This approach would reserve the uppermost stories for residential development. Existing upper-story residential units are preserved through the review of second-story residential conversions and the prohibition of conversions above that level. Special controls are applied to enhance the retail character and preserve the mix of commercial uses by limiting eating and drinking establishments and financial institutions and prohibiting drive-up uses.

North Beach

North Beach functions as a neighborhood marketplace, citywide specialty shopping and dining district, tourist attraction, as well as an apartment and residential hotel area. Traditionally, the district has provided mostly convenience goods and services for North Beach residents and portions of Telegraph and Russian Hills. North Beach's eating, drinking, and entertainment establishments serve a much wider trade area and attract many tourists. The balance between neighborhood-serving convenience stores and citywide specialty businesses has shifted gradually, as some convenience stores have turned over to bakeries, ice cream parlors, and restaurants. The proliferation of financial services has also upset the district's balance of uses. The relocation of business and professional offices from downtown to North Beach threatens the loss of upper-story residential units.

New zoning controls are designed to ensure the livability and attractiveness of North Beach, yet provide for some future growth. New commercial development is permitted in the first two stories and, in keeping with the existing mixed-use character of the district, housing is encouraged in the upper stories. Limitations of housing conversion to non-residential uses preserve existing upper-story housing units and help prevent the location of non-neighborhood serving offices in North Beach. Special controls are also proposed to limit eating and drinking establishments and financial services, the proliferation of which threaten to disturb the existing well-balanced mix of retail sales and services in the district.

Polk Street

Sitting in the gulch between Nob and Russian Hills and Pacific Heights, the Polk Street neighborhood commercial district has a dense mixed-use character with residential units above ground-story commercial use. The district has a continuous commercial frontage along Polk Street for nearly the entire length. Larkin and side streets in the district have a greater proportion of residences. Polk Street provides convenience goods and services to the residential communities in the Polk Gulch neighborhood and to the residents on the west slopes of Nob and Russian Hills. The district has many apparel and specialty stores, as well as some automotive uses, which serve a broader trade area. Commercial uses also include offices, as well as movie theaters, restaurants, and bars which keep the district active into the evening.

The district proposed for Polk Street is designed to encourage and promote development which fully utilizes the potential building envelope and is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. Consistent with Polk Street's existing dense, mixed-use character, future development may contain commercial uses in the first two stories and residential uses in the upper stories. Existing housing units are preserved by regulating upper-story conversions. Polk Street has an active and continuous retail frontage serving both citywide and neighborhood customers. Controls limit the proliferation of eating, drinking, and entertainment establishments, which can produce noise, garbage, and other nuisances and displace other types of local-serving convenience goods and services.

Sacramento Street

Located in Presidio Heights, the Sacramento Street neighborhood commercial district functions as a small-scale linear shopping area. The daytime-oriented retail district's stores provide a limited array of convenience goods to the immediate neighborhood. Sacramento Street also has many elegant clothing, accessory, and antique stores and services, such as hair salons which attract customers from a wider trade area. Its numerous medical and business offices draw clients from throughout the city. Evening activity in the district is limited to one movie theater and some stores at the corner of Presidio Avenue.

The district proposed for Sacramento Street is designed to promote adequate growth opportunities for development that is compatible with the surrounding low-density residential neighborhood. Generally, new commercial development is permitted in the first two stories, with residential use permitted at the second story and above. Existing residential units are protected by prohibiting conversions at the third story and above, and requiring conditional use review for second story conversions. Special controls are designed to protect existing ground-story retail uses and encourage a continuous retail frontage. Medical and business office growth is directed to the second story, with some ground story restrictions. Rear yard controls would protect surrounding residents from potential problematic uses. The daytime orientation of the district is encouraged by limiting the late night hours of operation for commercial uses.

Union Street

The Union Street commercial district provides limited convenience goods for the residents of sections of the Cow Hollow, Marina, and Pacific Heights neighborhoods immediately surrounding the street. Important aspects of Union Street's business activity are eating and drinking establishments and specialty shops whose clientele come from a wide trade area. There are also a significant number of professional, realty, and business offices. Many restaurants and bars as well as the district's two movie theaters have day and evening hours. On weekends the street's clothing, antique stores and galleries do a vigorous business.

The district proposed for Union Street is designed to provide sufficient growth opportunities for commercial development that is in keeping with the existing scale and character, that promotes a continuous retail frontage, and protects adjacent residential livability. Commercial development is permitted in the first two stories and monitored at the third story and above by conditional use review. Existing upper-story residential units are preserved by requiring conditional use review of conversions to non-residential use. Special controls are designed to preserve the remaining convenience businesses and to reduce the cumulative impacts which the growth of certain uses, especially eating and drinking establishments, have on neighborhood residents. Controls also regulate the development of financial, business and professional offices and prohibit most automobile and drive-up uses.

Valencia Street

The Valencia Street commercial district provides a limited selection of convenience goods for the residents of sections of the Mission and Dolores Heights. Valencia Street also serves a wider trade area with retail and wholesale home furnishings and appliance outlets. In addition, the commercial district has several automobile-related businesses and large light manufacturing operations. Eating and drinking establishments contribute to the street's mixed-use character and evening activity. There are an increasing number of upper-story professional and business offices, some of which have displaced residences.

The Valencia Street district has a pattern of large lots and businesses and a sizable number of upper-story residential units. In keeping with the mixed-use character of the district, commercial development would be encouraged mainly at the ground story and housing at the upper stories. Limited new office growth would be accommodated at the second story by conditional use, but commercial uses are prohibited above the second story. Existing residential units are protected by requiring conditional use review for second-story conversions and prohibiting conversions above. Special controls are designed to monitor the scale of uses, but encourage continuous and varied retail frontage. Retail frontage is promoted by monitoring institutional uses, and prohibiting drive-up uses, most automobile uses, and new non-retail commercial uses.

24th Street-Mission

The 24th Street-Mission neighborhood commercial district is a mixed use district providing convenience goods for the immediate neighborhood as well as comparison shopping goods and services to a wider trade area. The street has a great number of Latin American restaurants, grocery stores, bakeries and other neighborhood and secondhand stores. Dwelling units are located above many ground story commercial uses.

The district proposed for 24th Street-Mission is designed to provide for sufficient growth potential for development consistent with the existing medium-scale pattern. Commercial uses are encouraged at the ground story and may be permitted at the second story by conditional use review. Existing upper-story housing units are preserved by prohibiting upper-story conversions of residences to commercial use. In order to maintain convenience stores and protect adjacent livability, the development and operation of eating and drinking establishments are limited. Continuous retail frontage is maintained and encouraged by prohibiting most automotive and drive-up uses.

24th Street-Noe Valley

The 24th Street-Noe Valley neighborhood commercial district is a daytime-oriented, multi-purpose commercial district which provides a mixture of convenience and comparison shopping goods and services to a predominantly local market area with primarily retail sales and personal services at the street level, some office uses on the second story, and residential use almost exclusively on the third and upper stories.

The district proposed for 24th Street-Noe Valley is designed to allow for development that is compatible with the existing small-scale, mixed-use neighborhood commercial character and surrounding residential area. Commercial uses are encouraged at the ground story, but new retail service growth requires conditional use review at the second story. New housing development would be permitted and promoted in the upper stories. The proposed controls also seek to preserve the existing upper-story housing units on 24th Street by prohibiting upper-story conversions. By prohibiting drive-up and most other auto-related uses, the controls are designed to prevent additional traffic and congestion on an already overburdened linear commercial strip. In order to maintain the variety and mix of retail sales and personal services along the commercial strip and to control the problems of traffic, congestion, noise, and late night activity, the location, distribution, and proliferation of certain potentially troublesome commercial uses, namely bars, restaurants, amusement enterprises, cabarets, hotels, and financial offices are regulated.



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FUTURE ACTIONS

The Neighborhood Commercial Rezoning Study is a draft for community review. Over the coming months, Department staff will prepare an environmental evaluation of the recommendations contained in the study and will meet with merchants, residents, and property owners to discuss the proposed Master Plan policies and zoning controls. This fall, following appropriate notice to all property owners and interested parties, the City Planning Commission will hold public hearings to receive testimony prior to taking action on the proposals.